

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
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FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0000
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PGOV, NI
SUBJECT: PUNCH REPORTS ON POLITICS

REF: LAGOS 2090

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED.
SUMMARY: PUNCH REPORTS ON POLITICAL MEETINGS.
POLICE VISIT PUNCH. END SUMMARY.

1. THE LAST TWO ISSUE NUMBERS OF PUNCH HAVE CARRIED
THREE STORIES REPORTING ON MEETINGS BY POLITICIANS
PREPARING FOR THE REVIVAL OF POLITICAL PARTIES
IN NIGERIA.

--MAY 18 PUNCH REPORTS THAT A MEETING OF
-TOP POLITICAL LEADERS IN THE OLD NORTH" WAS
HELD IN KADUNA ON MAY 13 TO "RESUSCITATE" THE
NORTHERN PEOPLES' CONGRESS (NPC). ATTENDING
THE MEETING WERE SIR KASHIM IBRAHIM, A FORMER
GOVERNOR OF THE NORTHERN REGION; ALHAJI INUA
WADA, A MINISTER N THE TAFAWA BELAWA GOVERNMENT;
AND MALLAM ALBA HABIB. ACCORDING TO THE STORY,
THE EFFORTS TO REVIVE THE NPC ARE A RESULT OF
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THE CONSTITUTENT ASSEMBLY'S (CA) ACTION ON THE
SHARIA ISSUE. CONTACTS ARE TO BE INTENSIFIED
WITH POLITICAL FIGURES FROM BENUE, GONGOLA, AND
PLATEAU STATES. THE PURPOSE IS TO "REGROUP THE
TEN STATES IN THE NORTH INTO A UNIFIED POLITICAL
FORCE."

--MAY 19 PUNCH REPORTS THAT ON MAY 13 A

MEETING OF IBO LEADERS FROM IMO, ANAMBRA, AND BENDEL STATES WAS HELD IN ENUGU AIMED AT FIGHTING THE ELECTIONS N 1979 "UNDER ONE MAJOR POLITICAL GROUP." ATTENDING THAT MEETING WERE FORMER EASTERN REGION GOVERNOR DR. AKANU IBIAM, CHIEF DENNIS OSADEBAY OF BENDEL STATE, AND CA MEMBER CHIEF JEROME UDOJI AMONG OTHERS. PUNCH REPORTS THAT A MAJORITY OF THOSE PRESENT, "ESPECIALLY THE YOUNG PROFESSIONALS AND BUSINESSMEN, REJECTED THE LEADERSHIP OF DR. K.O. MBADIWE AND HIS CLOSE ASSOCIATES." A SECOND MEETING OF YOUNG IBO LEADERS CHAIRED BY CA MEMBER DR. B.U. NZERIBE ASSISIED BY N.N. ANAH AND NANNA UKAEGBU SE FRQA STEERING COMMITTEE "TO WORK THERE PLATFORM FOR THE FORMATION OF A POLITICAL PARTY."

S --MAY 19 PUNCH REPORTS THAT A MEETING OF CHIEF AWOLOWO'S TOP AIDES WILL TAKE PLACE IN LAGOS ON MAY 28. THE MEETING WILL CONSIDER REPORTS FROM SUBCOMMITTEES APPOINTED AT AN EARLIER MEETING AND COMPARE NOTES WITH A VIEW TO SETTING UP A NEW POLITICAL PARTY.

2. AS PUNCH HAS BECOME MORE INTERESTED IN POLITICAL PARTIES, THE POLICE HAVE BECOME MORE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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INTERESTED IN PUNCH. BOTH PUNCH NUMBERS REPORT LATE NIGHT POLICE VISITS TO THE PUNCH OFFICES IN IKEJA. THE POLICE AFTER SOME OMINOUS POSTURING TOOK SEVERAL ADVANCE COPIES OF THE PAPER AND DEPARTED. END UNCLASSIFIED.

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4. COMMENT: WE ARE NOT IN A POSITION TO COMMENT ON THE SUPPOSED NORTHERN MEETING; HOWEVER, THE ACCOUNT OF THE ENUGU MEETING IS CONGRUENT WITH WHAT WE HAVE BEEN HEARING. IT HAS BEEN APPARENT FOR SOME TIME THAT VGADIWE IS NOT ACCEPTABLE TO YOUNGER IBO POLITICAL ELEMENTS (REFTEL).
EASUM

NOTE BY OC/T: MESSAGE AS RECEIVED.

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